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SUBJECT: (Optional)

Brezhnev Proposes "Code of Conduct" For Big Power Behavior In The Third World

FROM:

D/FBIS/DDS&T

Room 1013 Key Bldg.

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

12 May 1981

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.
DCI
Room 7E12 Hqs.

Mr. Casey:

The attached analysis of a Soviet propaganda initiative was selected for your background reading. We believe the proposal enunciated by Brezhnev is significant. The item is essentially the same as the lead article in our current issue of "Trends in Communist Media."

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1 DDCI
Room 7E12 Hqs.

Admiral Inman, USN:

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1. DDS&T
Room 6E45 Hqs.

Les,

Attached is a copy of an analytical item that I have sent to the DCI and DDCI for background reading. The article, which appears essentially in the same form in the Trends, discusses a significant Soviet propaganda initiative.

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BREZHNEV PROPOSES "CODE OF CONDUCT"

FOR BIG POWER BEHAVIOR IN THE THIRD WORLD

President Brezhnev has responded to Reagan Administration censure of Soviet international behavior by proposing a "code of conduct" to govern actions by both big powers in the Third World. Brezhnev used the occasion of a 27 April Kremlin dinner for visiting Libyan leader al-Qadhafi to float the proposal, which departs from Moscow's prior public position that formal guidelines for big power behavior in the Third World were unnecessary. Brezhnev's proposal has all the earmarks of a major Soviet propaganda initiative.

The proposal for a big power "code of conduct" appears to have a dual purpose. On the one hand, extensive Soviet media publicity for Brezhnev's remarks suggests that his proposal is intended as a propaganda ploy to blunt U.S. criticism of Soviet behavior and place Washington on the defensive. A specific goal may be to influence the North-South summit meeting scheduled to be held in Mexico City in October. At the same time, Moscow may hope to use the code-of-conduct proposal as the opening position in eventual bilateral discussions with the Reagan Administration.

Brezhnev's initiative appears to reflect the views of Soviet foreign policy specialists who have maintained that unregulated U.S.-Soviet competition in the Third World has adversely affected bilateral relations. A few days before Brezhnev's speech, an influential Soviet journalist with close ties to the leadership publicly suggested that "something like rules" might have to be worked out in order to ease current tensions.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT Brezhnev's proposed "code of conduct" would apply, he said, to the USSR, the United States, and other permanent members of the UN Security Council. It consists of five principles, some incorporating standard Soviet phraseology in interstate treaties and others drawing on standard themes in Soviet commentary on the Third World. The objective, according to Brezhnev, would be to apply generally accepted international norms to "the young states of Africa, Asia, and Latin America" through agreement on "roughly" the following:

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- + Noninterference in the domestic affairs of the Third World countries and renunciation of "spheres of interests."
- + Respect for the territorial integrity of countries and inviolability of their borders and renunciation of support for "separatist movements."
- + Recognition of the right of the Third World countries to enjoy "equal participation in international life" and to develop relations with any other country.
- + Recognition of each nation's sovereignty over its natural resources and equality in international economic relations and support for Third World efforts to eliminate colonialism, racism, and apartheid.
- + Respect for nonalignment and renunciation of attempts to create "military-political blocs" in the Third World.

MEDIA PUBLICITY

Soviet mass media are treating Brezhnev's speech as a major statement on U.S.-Soviet relations.

Commentaries on the speech in the party daily PRAVDA and the government paper IZVESTIYA have held up the code-of-conduct proposal as testimony to Moscow's support for Third World aspirations, while accusing Washington of aggressive intentions in such regions as Central America, the Persian Gulf, and southern Africa. Soviet radio broadcasts to the Third World have replayed these commentaries.

THE PRIOR SOVIET POSITION.

Moscow until now has consistently dismissed the idea, raised increasingly in the West since the mid-1970's, that peaceful coexistence between East and West requires agreed "rules of the game" in the Third World as well. Soviet officials, when they have addressed the issue at all in recent years, have argued that existing international and bilateral agreements are sufficient for regulating superpower behavior. As recently as 22 April, Brezhnev's Politburo colleague Konstantin Chernenko declared in the annual Lenin Day address that the Soviet Union rejects "a code of behavior that would throw mankind back into a long-past age" of Western dominance of the Third World.

Addressing the notion of linkage on 28 March in a Moscow TV international affairs program, Central Committee International Information Department head Leonid Zamyatin labeled demands for rules of behavior "arrogant." The USSR, Zamyatin said, has no obligation to "prove that it can behave in a manner acceptable from the U.S. viewpoint."

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SOVIET PROPONENTS
OF A NEW APPROACH

Brezhnev's decision to break with the traditional line may have been influenced by some Soviet foreign policy commentators who have publicly expressed concern over the negative effects of unregulated Soviet-American competition in the Third World. Such concern has been conveyed by midlevel officials like USA and Canada Institute Director Georgiy Arbatov. IZVESTIYA political observer Aleksandr Bovin has been the most outspoken on the subject. In remarks made in Japan and published in the Tokyo daily MAINICHI SHIMBUN on 22 April, just a few days before Brezhnev's speech, Bovin stated that Moscow and Washington "may have to work out something like rules" for competition in the Third World and "devise means of promoting the easing of tension between them." Bovin has a history of publicly espousing positions that have diverged from the prevailing line in Soviet mass media propaganda but have presaged shifts in official Soviet policy.

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